

PHILIP M. CRANE  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS  
8TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON  
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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

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September 9, 2004

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, the Capitol

The Honorable Tom DeLay  
Majority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-107, the Capitol

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young  
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
H-218, the Capitol

The Honorable James Walsh  
Chairman,  
Subcommittee on VA-HUD Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
H-143, the Capitol

Dear Mr. Speaker, Mr. Leader and Mr. Chairmen:

I am writing to you to request emergency assistance through the FY 2005 VA-HUD Appropriations legislation for the Wauconda Sand and Gravel Superfund site in my hometown of Wauconda, Illinois. Many of the residential wells surrounding the Superfund site have shown elements of the chemical, vinyl chloride, and the number of contaminated wells continues to increase. It is due to this that I am requesting \$6 million in funding to increase the groundwater testing and monitoring as well as the implementation of a study to determine possible clean drinking water sources available to the residents surrounding the Wauconda Sand and Gravel Superfund Site in the long term. There is reason to believe that this source will be outside the Village of Wauconda and a costly venture.

In 1941, the Wauconda Sand and Gravel Pit in the Village of Wauconda in Lake County, Illinois, began operation as a landfill. The site consists of roughly 74 acres, which includes a 47-acre non-permitted landfill, and a 6-acre landfill permitted by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). According to a health consultation report from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, this landfill accepted an estimated 5.4 million cubic yards of waste that included residential garbage, construction debris, and industrial waste and sludge until its closure in July, 1978.

After receiving information concerning the dumping of large quantities of polychlorinated biphenyl, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and the IEPA started investigations into the possibility of chemicals leaking from the site

After receiving the results from those investigations, the USEPA placed the Wauconda Sand and Gravel pit on the National Priorities List in September, 1983.

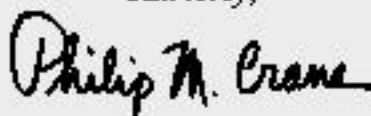
On September 15, 2003, the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) started the sampling of residential wells east of the Superfund site. After the completing the testing of 17 residential wells, the LCHD results showed vinyl chloride contamination in 7 wells, with the highest level of contamination being 3.6 micrograms per liter. On January 13, 2004, the LCHD held a public meeting to discuss these results with local residents.

When informed of the results from the LCHD, I immediately contacted the US EPA insisting that more residential wells be tested and bottled water be provided to the residents that tested at high levels of contamination. Per my request, the agency started negotiating with the potentially responsible parties, named the Wauconda Task Group (WTG), to provide the testing of 121 additional wells in the Hillcrest Subdivision and to provide bottled drinking water to residents testing at high levels. The WTG complied by testing the additional wells and providing the bottled drinking water. After completion of the testing in March 2004, 81 residential wells showed vinyl chloride contamination. These results were discussed with local residents and bottled water was provided to those residents whose wells tested above 1 micrograms per liter. The WTG, under the oversight of the US EPA, was also given the opportunity to expand the testing sites.

Since the last round of testing, little has been done to provide residents with clean drinking water or to increase the speed at which testing is being done. There has been little focus on examining a long-term solution, which was recommended in a Health Consultation conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on May 24, 2004. When we are dealing with one of life's most basic elements, it is imperative that action is taken with a steadfast pace. It is with this urgency that I request \$6 million in funding to increase the ground water testing, monitoring and the implementation of a study to determine possible clean drinking water sources available to the residents surrounding the Wauconda Sand and Gravel Superfund Site in the long term.

I appreciate your willingness to consider this emergency request as the House of Representatives moves forward with the appropriations process. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know or have a member of your staff contact Eric Grey on my staff. He can be at 202/225-3711.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip M. Crane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Philip M. Crane, M.C.

PMC/eg